

6

22

L I N E S,

IN MEMORY

OF

THE REVEREND JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

"Such men have their reward in Heaven."

Priestley's Letters to Burke.

"The Muse forbids the virtuous man to die."

Mason.

SHEFFIELD :

PRINTED BY J. GALES, AND SOLD BY HIM AND THE OTHER BOOKSELLERS OF SHEFFIELD;
AND G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, LONDON.

=
M,DCC,XCI.



TO THE
CHRISTIAN WORLD,

THE
FOLLOWING TRIBUTE,

TO THE MEMORY OF
AN EMINENT PASTOR,
A DISTINGUISHED PHILANTHROPIST,

AND
A ZEALOUS DIVINE,

Is humbly dedicated,

BY THE AUTHOR.

CHRISTIAN WORLD

REVISED EDITION

NEW YORK

THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

A DISTINGUISHED CHRISTIANITY

AND

A ZEALOUS DIVINE

BY THE AUTHOR

BY THE AUTHOR

P R E F A C E.

*O*F the many Reformers, who have a distinguished claim to the attention of mankind, few will be found who merit a more conspicuous place in the annals of Ecclesiastical History than JOHN WESLER; the subject of the ensuing lines.

Whether the future Historian may class this illustrious Personage with LUTHER, CALVIN, or KNOX, is no part of my present business: it is, however, certain, that in point of Genius, Integrity, Learning, Perseverance, Temperance and Charity, he will be found to rank with any of the above eminent Reformers.

Few men ever deserved more the esteem and grateful veneration of their Country than Mr. WESLER. Ever ready to instruct the Poor—to whom instruction is a real Charity—he thought no toil too much: and, it must be confessed, even by those who may not be of his communion, that his endeavours to establish Piety, habitual Devotion, Meekness and Sobriety, have not been unblest with the fairest fruits: and I am fully persuaded that by

B

his

his means more real benefit hath flowed to the lower and middle ranks of life, than from the united endeavours of many both preceding and contemporary labourers, whose cares and exertions nevertheless may not have been in vain.

Of a Character so public, so eminent, and so generally known, the world no doubt, as on other occasions, will form various opinions: but amidst the clamours of Partiality, and the murmurs of Prejudice, TRUTH will be heard to whisper—HE HATH BEEN THE MEANS OF MUCH GOOD TO MANKIND!

The energetic and nervous language of the most eloquent Writer of the present age, may, without impropriety, or prostitution be applied to JOHN WESLEY.—

“ He had high and worthy notions of his function and destination; his hope was full of Immortality; he looked not to the paltry pelf of the moment, nor to the temporary and transient praise of the vulgar; but to a solid permanent existence, in the permanent part of his nature, and to a permanent fame and glory, in the example he left as a rich inheritance to the world.”

BURKE'S LETTER ON THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE,
2d Edit. p. 137.

From the idea that Mr. Wesley had been a Benefactor to his Country, and to Mankind,—that he had been an Ornament to Human Nature, and might be held up as an illustrious example to Posterity, the following Verses originated. If these lines excite the ardor of emulation, so as to call forth from some superior Poet, a tribute more worthy of its object;—or if the Moral which they aim to inculcate, be the means of leading to, or confirming any one in the ways of Virtue and Religion, my end is accomplished.

As

As to the Verses themselves, they are before the Public. Of their merits, or faults, that Public will judge for itself. To challenge Criticism by an obtrusive temerity, would deserve the punishment due to arrogance: and meanly to deprecate the critical decision by servile concession, would be weak and frivolous. Without rashness on the one hand, or timidity on the other, I submit my Verses chearfully to the public approbation, or the public censure; conscious, however ill I may have written, of having at least
 MEANT WELL.

All that remains to be said, is, that the following lines had not their birth in the bosom of leisure;—they are not the fruit of Academie Shades, —but were produced in the few—the very few moments that a life of incessant labour barely allows to the visitations of the Muse.



LINES,

IN MEMORY OF THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

AND shall he fall, shall PATRIARCH WESLEY die,
 And no Bard pay the tribute of a sigh ?
 Shall he who sweetly rung the warbling wire*
 Die undistinguish'd by the living Lyre ?—
 While slow and solemn moves his honor'd bier,
 Shall no Muse drop the fond *embalming* tear ;
 O'er his cold turf in sorrow's accents mourn,
 And twine the flowers of Verse around his Urn ;
 To Time's strong Plume his Memory give to soar,
 Till TRUTH, RELIGION, VIRTUE are no more !

Forbid it ye who weave the grateful lay
 Warm in resistless Fancy's *burning* ray.
 Ye chosen few whom MERIT can inspire,
 Whose bosoms glow with more than Friendship's fire,

C

Let

* Mr. Wesley had a very pleasing Poetical Talent. Many of his occasional Pieces are scattered in the Magazines, and public Prints; from whence, it were to be wished, the future Editor of his Works would collect the *Fugitives*, and give them, in an unmutated state, to the Public.

Let not the Tomb ingulph th' instructive Sage,
 But pour his Virtues on th' illumin'd page.
 O snatch his Fame from strong Oblivion's hand,
 And bid it wide—and wider still expand ;
 Trace on Truth's Tablet the recording line,
 That future times may know the Man Divine :
 Hang with bright hands th' emblazon'd scroll on high,
 In the rich Fane of IMMORTALITY :
 The glowing record shall RELIGION own,
 And smile assentive from her hallow'd Throne.

Ye favor'd few who bear the Poet's name,
 Active as light, or as the solar flame,
 Why sleep your silver Harps' enchanting sound,
 And breathe no gales of vocal sweets around ?
 Ye Bards ! ye Sages ! why refuse to frame
 Th' immortal Chaplet to your WESLEY's name ?
 Why should the humblest of the tuneful Choir,
 Alone to worth departed string his Lyre ;
 Why should that worth adorn alone his Lays
 Which all Parnassus might conspire to praise ;
 Alone by him be sung, be wept, deplor'd,
 Whose faint hand feebly smites th' applauding chord ;
 Who weak in power, yet warm in Virtue's cause,
 The great EXEMPLAR of the CHRISTIAN draws ?—
 O may these lays, like the Electric beam,
 From Bard to Bard in swift succession stream,
 Rouse in their breasts the chill Poetic fire,
 Till Rapture wakens every dormant Lyre ;
 Till to the Sons of PEACE the world around,
 Floats the full choiring universal Sound !

Say

Say, Power supreme, that o'er my mind presides,
 Whose breath informs me, and whose spirit guides,
 How the APOSTLE, on his MASTER's plan,
 Toil'd, wept, and watch'd, consol'd and pitied Man.
 Warm springs his Soul aloft on Eagle wing,
 To foreign Climes the GOSPEL's TRUTH to bring.
 He spreads his white sails on th' Atlantic wave,*
 Intent the unenlighten'd race to save :
 No dangers fright his vent'rous Prow away,
 No pleasures tempt his ardent heart astray ;
 Not all the terrors of the deep have power,
 When all the Demons of the Tempest lour,
 To turn his Spirit from its destin'd goal ;
 Or change the steady purpose of his soul.
 He brings no slaught'ring Gun, no murd'ring Sword,
 He bears no weapon but TRUTH's SACRED WORD.
 Ye GEORGIAN coasts ! to you he turns his oars,
 And plants the Palms of Mercy on your shores.
 He gives aloft REDEMPTION's fruits to glow,
 And high SALVATION's " Angel Trumpet blow ;"
 And bids now loud—now louder still the note,
 Of " PEACE ON EARTH," to listening nations float.
 His Mission ended, crosses the reflux main,
 The tall ship gives him to our shores again.
 Glowing with Christian Zeal, and Patriot fire,
 With all the love that COUNTRY can inspire,
 With all the warmth that Genius can impart,
 He pours the living precept on the heart :

Spreads

* Alluding to Mr. Wesley's Voyage to Georgia, to convert the Indians to Christianity.

Spreads on the darkling mind th' illumining ray,
 And all the glories of ETERNAL DAY.
 Consoles the feeble, and confirms the strong,
 And leads the timid fearlessly along :
 Grief, Sickness, Sorrow, Want, his bounties share,
 And needy worth becomes his guardian care.
 Around his Board no pamper'd lacquies wait,
 In all the pomp of Oriental state.
 He rears no Palaces, no wide spread plain
 Calls him sole Lord of all its proud domain.
 He courts no grandeur, and he hoards no wealth,
 And Toil, and Temperance procure him health.
 Not even Avarice, the Vice of Age,
 Clouds the mild lustre of his life's last stage.
 Rich in the treasures of a feeling mind,
 He knows no good but that of ALL MANKIND,
 No selfish aim inspires his great design,
 But HOLY LOVE and CHARITY DIVINE :
 While to the wrangling sons of noisy strife,
 He gives th' example of a BLAMELESS LIFE.

Speak ye who oft have seen with grief sincere,
 His moist eye quiv'ring with the gemmy tear ;
 Who oft have seen the deep Sigh's thrilling throe
 Shake his wrung breast, at sight of human woe :
 Speak ye who often from his lips have caught,
 Th' instructive moral, with Devotion fraught ;
 Ye who have heard him in life's social hour,
 The stream of flowing Conversation pour,
 And wind the varying tide serene along,
 Rapid, or gentle, luculent, or strong.—

Speak

Speak ye in witness of this faithful verse,
Which aims the Sage's merits to rehearse ;—
Ye who best knew him, celebrate his name ;
And his high worth with gratitude proclaim.

When Britain's sons shall raise the Column high,
Sacred to worth the Arts forbid to die ;—
Then learns the Pedestal with life to glow,
Then learns the breathing Bard and Sage to show ;
The Chisel's powers in high *Relievo* trace
Each worthies' form, and soul-illumin'd face :
In finish'd grace the Phidian labours rise,
And charm futurity's delighted eyes :
Presiding Art with Judgment's steady aim,
Groups in one Tablet every kindred name :
Sculpture's own Spirit gives the leading tone,
Inspires the Bust, and animates the Stone ;
Her guiding hands the forming Steel direct,
To give each semblance its sublime effect :
The attendant Muses their bright garlands bring,
In all the glow and beauty of the Spring ;
With rosy fingers cull the fairest flowers,
That bloom dependant in Castalian bowers,
And round the mimic Patriots brows divine
With pearly hands the verdant Chaplets twine.—
—Divine PHILANTHROPY descends the sky,
Hangs o'er the Artist with enamour'd eye,
Enraptur'd views with extatic delight,
Her HOWARD's dubious shade,* with WESLEY's form unite.

D

Round

* Her Howard's dubious shade.—It has been said that there is no existing Portrait of this celebrated Philanthropist:

Round Wesley's Urn no sanguine laurels bloom,
 No Widow's Curses murmur on his Tomb :
 No blood-stain'd spectres haunt his parting hour,
 Grin round his bed, and o'er his pillow lour ;
 No butcher'd Orphan glares indignant by,
 To scare the slumbers from his closing eye ;
 But PEACE comes smiling on her Seraph wing,
 And steals the barb from DEATH's *relenting* sting :
 To his last hours the good Man's meed is given,
 APPROVING CONSCIENCE AND APPROVING HEAVEN !

Such is the end decreed to all the just ;
 So placid sink they to their kindred dust :
 Far different to the lot which they shall find,
 The GREAT—THE SPLENDID—BUTCHERS OF MANKIND !
 Inhuman Suwarow,* far different thine,
 If the prophetic Muse may aught divine.
 Even now mine eye beholds thy Death-bed Scene,
 “ As busy Fancy lifts the veil between ;”
 In lucid vision sees before thine eyes,
 In bloody pomp all ISMAIL's horrors rise ;
 Sees the enfanguin'd field before thee roll,
 And terror seize the Portals of thy Soul :
 Marks group'd upon the scene of dearthful strife,
 The slaughter'd Husband, and the bleeding Wife :
 'Twin'd in each others arms the Son and Sire,
 Pierc'd through at once in mutual death expire.

With

* General Suwarow, the conqueror of Ismail, an important Fortress belonging to the Turks. When this place fell into the hands of the barbarous Russian, no quarter was given. The carnage, according to some of the papers, continued THREE DAYS ; in which were doomed to the sword, of the Turks only, THIRTY-THREE THOUSAND MEN !

With hair dishevell'd and demeanor wild,
 The frantic mother for her clinging child,
 Spreads to the Soldier her imploring hands,
 And mercy for her shrinking son demands :
 She sues, implores, intreats his wrath to spare,
 Her bosom heaving, and her white breast bare
 (The faithful Muse thus heard her prayer arise,
 Ere Death's cold slumbers clos'd her streaming eyes.)
 " O spare my child ! regard his helpless age !
 And wreak on me thy fury, and thy rage !
 Pour not the current of his life blood clear,
 But let thy vengeful dagger riot *here*."—
 —When lo ! ere past her lips th' imploring breath,
 Descends the ruffian stroke and mows them down in death !

These rise before thee, wretched as thou art !
 And keen REMORSE runs fiery through thy heart !
 Grim glide the Spirits of the goary dead,
 And mutter vengeance on thy shrinking head :
 " Around in dreadful harmony they join,"
 And scowling cry, behold ! these hated deeds are thine !
 Then all the vast variety of woe,
 Thy wrung, thy tortur'd mind is given to know.
 All MERCY vanish'd, HOPE's firm anchor lost,
 On black DESPAIR's disastrous ocean tost,
 Rack'd on the wheel of DOUBT, or rudely torn,
 On *grinding* FRENZY's CONSCIENCE POINTED Thorn.
 Hot at thy heart thou feel'st eternal fires,
 And in the horror of thy guilt expires !

Such

Such are the terrors that incessant wait
 The closing scene of those the world calls GREAT !
 Dark sets their Sun, depriv'd of all his light,
 In sad Eclipse and never-ending night !—
 But see ! contrasting COMFORT's glories beam,
 In Rainbow colours her bright splendors stream.
 The good man sees the radiant vision rise,
 And all Heaven opens on his ravish'd eyes.
 He sees his Star sublime in orient glow,
 And quits exulting this dim scene below.
 So WESLEY died, in visions of the blest,
 Without a sigh quiescent sunk to rest.
 And so may ALL without a sigh, a tear,
 Before the awful front of DEATH appear,
 Whose life trac'd backward thro' revolving time,
 Appears unstain'd, unfulled by a crime :
 For trust the Muse that holds this Scripture high,
 WHO LIVES LIKE WESLEY SHALL LIKE WESLEY DIE !



F I N I S.